

STEERING, LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

April 6, 2009

5:30 p.m.

Courthouse

MINUTES:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Jack Black
Commissioner Adam Coggin
Commissioner Gary Farley
Commissioner Jeff Jordan
Commissioner Jeff Phillips
Commissioner Steve Sandlin
Commissioner John Rodgers, C

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ernest Burgess Ronald Williams
Sonya Stephenson Richard Gable
Becky Shelton

Chairman Rodgers presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with all members being present at that time.

MINUTES:

"Commissioner Coggin moved, seconded by Commissioner Phillips, to approve the minutes of the last meeting as mailed. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

ANNOUNCE THREE VACANCIES ON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS BOARD:

Chairman Rodgers advised the positions of the Mayors of Smyrna, LaVergne and Eagleville or their appointed representatives on the Emergency Communications Board were expiring and accordingly being announced.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT REPORT:

The Committee was reminded the initial set of suggested changes to the Employee Handbook were presented at the last meeting. Ms. Stephenson advised the County Attorney has reviewed the same and made minor changes. Ms. Stephenson asked if there were any questions or changes to the first set of changes and received general discussion. Ms. Stephenson next presented the second set of sections of the employee handbook containing changes advising a third set of section changes will be presented next month with the final document presented in June for consideration which hopefully will be in final form. Chairman Rodgers asked for a copy of the final document with a synopsis of the changes to be made available to Commissioners prior to final consideration so they would have time to review.

Ms. Stephenson next presented her first quarter report for the use and information of the Committee. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Farley, to approve the first quarter report as presented. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

COMPENSATION FOR NON-EMPLOYEE MEMBERS OF RECORDS COMMISSION:

The Committee was reminded this matter was previously considered. Commissioner J. Jordan advised there are only three members of the Records Commission affected but there is a State statute authorizing payment for service. The Committee was advised there are members on the Insurance Committee that serve without compensation but that committee is not covered by a State statute authorizing payment. Following discussion,

"Commissioner J. Jordan moved, seconded by Commissioner

Sandlin, to compensate the three members of the Records Commission who do not receive a fixed annual salary from the State or County \$25 per meeting for serving on the Records Commission and forward this to the Budget Committee. This motion passed unanimously by roll call vote."

STATE LITTER LAW REVIEW:

The Committee was advised at the March 3, 2009 Public Works Committee meeting a motion was passed requesting the Steering Committee review the current litter laws to determine changes needed to strengthen them. The Committee was provided copies of the current litter laws. Mayor Burgess advised the laws seem sufficient, the weakness is in enforcement. Mayor Burgess further advised the Building Codes Department may be able to assist in enforcement during this down time in building. Mayor Burgess was asked to put a copy of the litter laws in the mailboxes of the Commissioners on Public Works Committee. This matter will be put on next month's agenda for further discussion. Commissioner Phillips requested information from larger counties on laws, enforcement, etc.

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN and RESOLUTION TO AFFIRM COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL TITLE VI REGULATIONS:

The Committee was provided draft Resolutions to adopt the Strategic Economic Development Plan and to affirm compliance with Federal Title VI regulations. Mayor Burgess advised these Resolutions are passed annually as part of the participation requirements in the Three Star Program. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Farley moved, seconded by Commissioner Phillips, to approve the Resolution to Adopt the Strategic Economic Development Plan and Resolution to Affirm Compliance with Federal Title VI Regulations. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

PARKING ON THE SQUARE:

Commissioner Williams addressed the Committee regarding County employee parking on the Square advising after the last discussion it had gotten better but is again on the rise and he felt it should be readdressed and something put in the employee handbook.

Richard Gable, Director of Main Street addressed the Committee advising short term parking spots need to be available to patrons of businesses, restaurants, law offices, etc. and that parking is a concern for merchants.

Mayor Burgess acknowledged the parking is a continuing problem but major progress has been made in this area. The Judges have cooperated with establishing two docket calls and Juvenile Court has been moved off the Square. Mayor Burgess commended County employees for their efforts advising the problems are mainly in the a.m.

Commissioner Williams advised it was troubling to him that County employees leave their workplace hourly to move vehicles on County time.

Commissioner Phillips suggested a follow-up letter to the prior letter the Mayor sent to employees encouraging them to continue their efforts as to parking because the vitalization of retail is contingent on parking. Commissioner Farley advised he would like added that if an employee is caught away from their desk then they are subject to disciplinary action per the Employee Handbook. Commissioner Phillips advised he preferred a more positive aspect to encourage employees to do what is right.

Commissioner Williams advised County vehicles with County decals are still parking for three to four hours at a time. Mayor Burgess advised this was too long a time period for a County vehicle to be parked on the Square. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Farley, to ask the County Mayor and Human Resources Director to author a memo to departments on the Square commending employee efforts over the last eighteen months on parking and encouraging employees to continue making efforts for the vitalization of retail businesses around the Square. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

Mayor Burgess advised the parking issue applies to more than County general employees as there are many elected officials located on the Square.

Commissioner Sandlin requested the Mayor and HR Director to work on a policy for the Employee Handbook to be presented in the future.

UPDATE ON TAX FREEZE LEGISLATION CHANGES:

Chairman Rodgers provided a bill summary from Teb Batey on proposed changes to the tax freeze legislation advising a bill has been introduced that specifies if spouses file a joint federal income tax return the income of a property owner's spouse is attributable to the property owner for purposes of determining whether the property is eligible for property tax relief for elderly or disabled homeowners.

There appearing to be no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Rodgers declared the meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

JOHN RODGERS, Chairman